

ASHFORD RURAL SOUTH FORUM

Kingsnorth Cricket Pavilion

Monday, 21 February 2011

Notes

PRESENT: Mike Angell (Chairman), Jim Wedgbury, Russell Corbett, Peter Davidson, Aline Hicks, John Holland, Bill Hollands and Peter Silliborne

IN ATTENDANCE: David Geoghegan (Community Engagement Manager) - Notes

Introduction

Mike Angell opened the meeting by saying that this was an informal meeting and asked each of the attendees to introduce themselves and say where they were from.

KCC Budget

The attached KCC budget for 2011/12 was distributed. Additionally Mike stressed:

- Unlike in many other authorities there would be no library closures.
- There would be no staff pay awards.
- Member's allowances would be cut by 2%.
- The Voluntary and Community Sector budgets would remain the same.
- The Youth Service would be more joined up with Ashford Borough Council.
- The Kent Highways Service will focus more on repair and maintenance.
- There will be a move from KCC providing services to commissioning; including some joint commissioning of public health services.
- Community wardens will stay.
- The young people's Freedom bus pass will increase from £50 to £100.
- There will be a review in Jan 2012 of bus subsidies. For rural buses the average subsidy is now running at £15 per passenger per journey!

[KCC Budget 2011/12](#)

Comments: There was disappointment the schools capital budget had been cut.

Welcome the fact that staff salaries over £100,000 would be published.

Crunch talks and a referendum are taking place on the £50m with the Iceland authorities. £9m has already been paid back.

Community Grants

Mike spoke about the three grant funding streams he has for community projects. His recommend spend for 2010/11 was:

Member Community Grant		
IT Centre	Carers Support	£1,000
Moving on Project	The Police	£1,500
Memorial Gardens	Johnsons Corner	£1,000
Pavilion	Shadoxhurst PC	£2,000
Sluice	Pilgrims Hospice	£650
Hamstreet-Paris Charity Ride	Bikes	£1,000
Ashford Counselling	Counselling Service	£500
New Equipment	Sk8 Park	£250
Hall Mirrors	Wharehorne	£450
Kingsnorth School	Breakfast Club	£1,000
Training	Canterbury Oast Trust	£650

Capital Grant to Ham Street - new build Project £5,900

Local Scheme Grant; Woodchurch PC for exercise equipment £2,900

These three funding streams will be available for the new financial year.

Projects must be discussed with Mike Angell before an application form can be issued.

Parish Council Issues

More responsibilities are to be devolved to Parish Councils; particularly around planning. However there was concern that this should only be for minor planning applications as appeals and litigation could bankrupt a Parish Council.

ABC would like KCC to devolve all planning application decisions; particularly for schools and libraries etc.

PCs would like more weight given to their views when ABC considers applications.

The police should advertise resident surgeries a least a week before they take place and not on the same day (need to discuss with PC Matt King for Stanhope Ward).

Highway Issues

Mike said he had £25k of highways funding to allocate each year and any unspent could be rolled forward. KCC members can use this fund for quick road repairs; which may later be reimbursed by KHS.

Amongst other issues, the Forum discussed the problems caused by Bogglers. The off roaders continue to cause a problem within the borough, with huge amounts of damage being done to bridleways. Many of the riders causing problems, known as bogglers, come over from the continent. There is a consultation about the problems with one possible solution being to close access during winter months.

Ruckinge has problems with surface water as the fibre optic duct outside the church hall is useless. KHS can't do anything as they say the company has gone out of business. Mike agreed to follow this up with Jennie Wickenden.

The attached paper on reporting a fault on highways was also distributed.

[Reporting a fault on a highway](#)

Any Other Business

Mike asked whether the forum was useful and all agreed it was and should meet three times a year. When appropriate they might be public meetings.

The Forum ended and agreed to meet again after the May local elections.